

U.S. SOUTHCOM United States Southern Command MEDIA UPDATE

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SOUTHCOM delivers relief supplies to victims of Noel

MIAMI – A C-130, under the direction of U.S. Southern Command, delivered 27 crates of potable water to San Isidro Air Base in the Dominican Republic Saturday for distribution to victims impacted by Tropical Storm Noel.

The C-130 relief sortie, supported by the Puerto Rico Air National Guard, originated at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen in Puerto Rico as part of ongoing U.S. military assistance to disaster response efforts under way in areas affected by the storm.

Two UH-60 Blackhawks from the Puerto Rico National Guard were also deployed to San Isidro Saturday and are currently conducting search and rescue missions in the area.

A humanitarian assistance survey team from U.S. Army South, based in San Antonio, Texas, is currently in the Dominican Republic and will partner with representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to assess humanitarian needs and identify support requirements.

A U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy is scheduled to transport two additional UH-60 helicopters Monday from Joint Task Force Bravo, located at Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras, to the Dominican Republic to provide additional support to the ongoing relief mission.

The SOUTHCOM deployments follow a disaster declaration announced by U.S. Chargé de Affaires Roland W. Bullen on Oct. 31, paving the way for U.S. assistance to the Caribbean nation.

To date, the U.S. Agency for International Development has contributed approximately \$959,000 in aid and assistance to the Dominican Republic in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Noel.

Three U.S. Coast Guard helicopters are also assisting with ongoing search and rescue operations and the delivery of emergency provisions. The U.S. Coast Guard crews have saved 54 lives and delivered 29,278 food rations to survivors.

U.S. military assistance to a foreign nation is normally requested by the host nation through the U.S. ambassador. Then, as the lead federal agent, OFDA fields the request and asks the Department of Defense for military assistance, if needed.

In the past 25 months, U.S. Southern Command has supported a dozen disaster relief missions in the Caribbean, Central and South America.

U.S. Southern Command military planners continue to work with interagency partners and their counterparts in countries affected by Noel to assess recovery needs in the affected areas and identify additional U.S. military units that may be able to provide assistance.

Additional information about U.S. military assistance to victims of Tropical Storm Noel will be released as it becomes available and posted at www.southcom.mil.

Additional U.S. Coast Guard and USAID information is available at www.cgvi.uscg.mil and <http://www.usaid.gov>.

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